

REMARKS

Claim 5 has been amended and claims 7 and 9-11 have been cancelled without prejudice. No new matter has been added by virtue of the amendments. For instance, support for the amendment of claim 5 appears e.g. in the original claims of the application.

Claims 5 and 7-11 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(e) over Nagai et al. (U.S. Patent 6,709,563).

While Applicants disagree with the rejection, a Rule 131 Declaration is being submitted under separate cover, which will antedate the citation.

Claims 5 and 9-11 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103 over Krishnamoorthy et al. (U.S. Patent 6,319,387) in view of Florio et al. (U.S. Patent 5,858,198).

While Applicants also disagree with this rejection, independent claim 5 (the only rejected independent claim) has been amended to incorporate features of claim 7. Claim 7 was not rejected over the cited document.

In view thereof, reconsideration and withdrawal of the rejection are requested.

It is believed the application is in condition for immediate allowance, which action is earnestly solicited.

Respectfully submitted,



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